



Title	The Peoples' Peking Man: Popular Science and Human Identity in Twentieth-Century China, by Sigrid Schmalzer
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task" (p. 273). Li does not intend to praise the collective farm organization. He just says that it was not that bad.

I recommend the book for its ethnographic value. Six decades of political upheaval and socioeconomic transformation in rural China come alive in oral histories, the author's personal experiences and observations, local records, archives, and documents. The stories in the pages exhibit a high level of authenticity and readability. Through the lives of the ordinary villagers, Huaiyin Li leads us on a journey to experience village life and to witness history.

The People's Peking Man: Popular Science and Human Identity in Twentieth-Century China. By Sigrid Schmalzer. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. Pp. xix+346. \$26.00 (paper).

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Sigrid Schmalzer's *The People's Peking Man* is a social history of Chinese paleoanthropology through the prism of Peking Man (*Sinanthropus pekinensis*) and its role in Chinese discourses on human evolution, Marxist theories of labor and class struggle, popular science, and national identity. This is a fascinating study that will interest sociologists of science and China scholars alike, exploring the twists and turns in the ambivalent and shifting relations between scientific evolutionism, ideological struggles against popular superstition and against bourgeois intellectualism, popular participation in scientific research, and the construction of human nature in the shifting terrain of China's political history since the early 20th century.

The book is organized following a roughly chronological plan, from the discovery of Peking Man in 1918 through the early years of the People's Republic, the late Cultural Revolution, and the post-Mao era. Several common themes run through the narrative. One of these concerns debates on human nature and evolution. While in the West the clash between Darwinian and Christian creationist views of human origins continues to stimulate heated polemics between two highly organized camps, each of which has some degree of political influence, in China the issues and debates surrounding the discovery of primitive humans have been shaped very differently. Social Darwinism became the credo of China's modernist elite, who saw in scientific backwardness the cause of China's weakness and humiliation by Western, Russian, and Japanese powers. After the demise of the Chinese imperial state in 1911, traditional belief had no institutions to defend it and came to be seen as the superstitions of the unlettered and ignorant masses. Starting in the early 1940s, the Chinese Communist Party began a systematic campaign to eradicate superstition through "science dissemination," or mass propaganda on basic scientific

knowledge (p. 6). Peking Man played a central role in the new narrative of human origins and development, standing at the beginning of the stages of history as outlined by Marx and Stalin, and illustrating Friedrich Engels's 1876 article "The Part Played by Labor in the Transition from Ape to Human"—which was central to the understanding of human nature in socialist ideology. Peking Man became the ancestor of the working class and, as the Chinese ancestor of all humans, provided a Chinese-centered genealogy for the spread of revolution from China to the entire human family. In the post-Mao period beginning in the late 1970s, however, Engels lost his hegemonic position in Chinese paleoanthropological discourse.

Socialist campaigns of science dissemination put Chinese paleoanthropologists and other scientists in a paradoxical position: on the one hand, they were called upon to use their expert knowledge to educate the masses in scientific knowledge—a role that reinforced their privileged position in relation to the people's ignorance—but on the other hand, they were subjected to political criticism for academic elitism and expected to "learn from the masses"—although the "knowledge" of the masses on matters related to human origins was largely denigrated as "superstition." Much of *The Peoples' Peking Man* focuses on the various attempts, more or less successful, to encourage popular participation in paleoanthropology—ranging from acknowledging the role of local farmers and field diggers in the discovery process, to appointing "workers" to supervise laboratory work, to seriously entertaining lay opinions on theoretical debates and the interpretation of fossil data. Schmalzer shows that it was in the late Cultural Revolution period (from 1971 to 1978) that top-down science dissemination and bottom-up mass participation in scientific work reached the greatest degree of integration—exemplified by the launch of the popular-science journal *Fossils*. And yet most of these attempts remained half-hearted and inconclusive, since, in spite of its ideological celebration of the masses, the regime could never fully question its view of the common people as ignorant and superstitious. In the post-Mao period, however, a new type of popular science emerged in the more free political atmosphere, focusing on strange and mysterious phenomena ranging from parapsychology to UFOs and the Chinese bigfoot, called the "Wild Man." "Investigations" of these topics were legitimized as "science dissemination," while market pressures encouraged the media to publish sensational reports on these phenomena, and legions of amateur investigators, speculators, and small-town experts contributed their sightings and interpretations. Many of China's leading paleoanthropologists took part in field research for Wild Man and published their reports alongside articles on Peking Man in *Fossils* magazine. Like Peking Man, Wild Man is a liminal creature, half human and half animal, who stimulates profound reflections and speculations on human nature. But where Peking Man has been presented as the starting point of a progressive human evolution, Wild

Man is often the subject of romantic dreams of freedom from the oppression of civilization and is linked to popular myths and legends.

For lack of space, I will not dwell on the other major issues discussed in this book, such as the relationship between paleoanthropology, Chinese nationalism, and human universalism. *The People's Peking Man* is an important contribution to the social and intellectual history of modern China and to the sociology of science. The book is clearly written and meticulously researched, using both primary documents and interviews with the key players in China. The publisher should be commended for allowing the author to use footnotes—rather than the unwieldy endnotes that have become dominant in American academic publishing—as well as Chinese characters in the text. My only criticism concerns what I found to be the annoying use of Chinese tone-marks on the romanizations of *all* occurrences of *all* Chinese terms. For unfamiliar words, Chinese-speaking readers prefer Chinese characters, while the tone marks are of no use to those who do not know Chinese. And for familiar names, do we really need to write Běijīng or Máo? But this is a small point—overall, *The People's Peking Man* is a pathbreaking study that does an excellent job at bringing the contemporary Chinese case into science studies.

The Scientific Life: A Moral History of a Late Modern Vocation. By Steven Shapin. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. Pp. xviii + 468. \$29.00.

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Steven Shapin has long been concerned with the significance of personal virtue in the making of knowledge. *The Scientific Life* is mainly anchored in the 20th century in the United States, covering the growth of industrial science in corporations such as Kodak, DuPont, and Bell and the more recent rise of the biotech field and the scientific entrepreneur. Indeed the book fittingly concludes in the San Diego sun with Shapin's description of a partying group of venture capitalists (VCs), science and engineering professors, tech transfer officers, and the like as they construct the technological future while consuming grilled shrimp (marinated in nuoc mam and lemongrass, we learn). This is culinary capitalism California style—the party buffet is the great networking enabler, the perfect excuse for the time-conscious and alcohol-conscious executives (one cannot imagine anyone actually getting drunk at these events) to make a detour and move on from one subgroup to another without anyone losing face.

It is particularly fitting that Shapin should end his story in the new hybrid world of university-industry relations to be found at La Jolla, because that is where “lab studies” got going three decades ago. In hindsight, the Salk Institute studied by Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar seems